

If he has children, they are taken from him. If he has a profession, he is driven from it. He is cut by the higher orders, and hissed by the lower. He is, in truth, a sort of whipping-boy, by whose vicarious agonies all the transgressors of the same class are, it is supposed, sufficiently chastised."

The Church has not been unabettled in its efforts to cast obloquy upon Paine's name. Other vested interests whose scions lauded his eloquence when foreign tyrants were assailed by him, turned and rent him when he directed attention to certain iniquities of his own.

Well could Paine have said with Lord Bacon: "The inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, are the sovereign good of human nature."

A candid person is not always a desirable companion, especially if he is wise to our little schemes, and truth has a shorter, uglier meaning when applied to our own sins.

The state of the American mind when Paine landed here was not unlike the state of the American mind today. The colonists were vacillating between their loyalty to the king and their desire and need of relief from his oppression. They seemed to think, somehow, that if the king were aware of their grievances he would act at once to remedy their ills. Such a nice man as George III. by the grace of God would not allow these things to be, and all that is necessary is to draft a petition and all will be well again. But the effect of complaints upon his highness was simply the loosening of the screws at one point and tightening them at another more vital point. Although harassed in every way, and at the end of their patience, it never occurred to them that the solution of their problem lay in dumping George and predatory barons into the harbor and attending to their own business in their own way. Into this abysmal darkness came Thomas Paine and his "Common Sense." The idea of separation had never occurred to them, nor had it been before suggested. "Common Sense" cleared the atmosphere and inspired the flagging spirits of the colonists with patriotic enthusiasm and hope. This enthusiasm Paine did not allow to evaporate. "Common Sense" was soon followed by "Crisis."

"These are the times that try men's souls," he cried. "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands by it NOW deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered, yet we have the consolation with us that the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange, indeed, if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated."

When he heard it said that Americans were rebels, he replied: "He that rebels against reason is a real rebel; but he that in defense of reason rebels against tyranny has a better title to Defender of the Faith than George III." To those who wished to postpone the war to some distant day, he said, in the true spirit of self-sacrifice: "Every generous parent should say, 'If there must be war let it be in my day that my child may have peace.'" It was in this spirit that Paine enlisted as a private. He was a brave and efficient soldier and was actively engaged in many battles. Later he became aide-de-camp to General Greene.

During his life, it is pleasant to reflect, he associated intimately with the finest minds of his time, not only in America, but

also in France and England. A list of his achievements would make a chapter in itself. Advanced thinkers of today are advocating many of the things which were original with Paine.

The revolution ended in America, Paine went to France and became at once a prominent figure in the struggle there. "Where liberty is not, there is my country," he said, and words with him became golden deeds. Paine was a patriot of the broadest type. "The world is my country, and to do good my religion." Also, he was a humanitarian. In the French Assembly, when everyone clamored for the death of Louis XIV., Paine, when such an act would place him under suspicion with the extremists, in true devotion to his principles reminded his hearers that they must conquer themselves and not in the new birth of freedom perpetuate the barbarity and cruelty of royalty against which they had struggled. "We will kill the king and spare the man," he said, and voted for the life of Louis. For this he was arrested, imprisoned and doomed to death, but he was saved from the guillotine.

In 1802, Jefferson induced Paine to return to America, and for several months he was tendered reception after reception in recognition of his services to this country and to mankind at large. Paine held that any system of religion that shocks the mind of a child cannot be a true system. He died very peacefully at the age of 72 in the year 1809, and was buried on his farm at New Rochelle, N. Y. In 1819, Wm. J. Cobbett, angered by America's neglect of Paine's name and the dishonor which his enemies heaped upon his memory, had the grave opened and his bones removed to England.

America today, in her own estimation, represents the apex of human civilization. If we were to listen to the Fourth of July bombast of certain fifth rate patriots, we would be led to believe that Justice, with scales held aloft poised and balanced, walks blind-folded as surely in our alleys as upon our boulevards. They will tell you that in this country all men are equal; that slavery does not exist; education is free to the poor as well as the rich; and that we abound in philanthropists and charity organizations. Let me remind you that all that is noble in America and American institutions today, is noble only because of the zeal and ardor and loyalty of Thomas Paine, and when America returns again to the purity of her early ideals the name of Thomas Paine will receive its meed of honor.

Mr. Boland's Poem.

THOMAS PAINE—1737-1809—1909.

Thy name I love, Tom Paine;
I love thy crystal brain,
I hail the hand that wrote
With sword-like pen, and smote
The despots from their long and rotten reign.

That name which calumnies,
And scorn and baseless lies
To us have made more dear,
That hand unstayed by fear,
When Freedom and her blessings was the prize.

From us who now may think
As freemen still, and drink
Of wisdom as a spring,

And fear not priest nor king,
Our praise receive—our chains rent link from link.

Here, though we praise or blame,

Time brightens still thy fame;
Earth's blame is Heaven's praise,
Lightening the prophet's days—
Savior of men, Tom Paine, I love thy name!

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

PERSONAL CONVICTION NO PROOF OF TRUTH.—ANTAGONISTIC TENDENCIES OF RELIGION AND PROGRESS.—
SOME NEW COMMANDMENTS AND MAXIMS
FOR INDIVIDUAL IMPROVEMENT.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

Whenever man has committed crimes and atrocities that go against human nature, it is done in the name of god, the assumed cause substituted for the real one—moral cowardice. Whenever men believe in some absurdity, at variance with their ordinary mode of thinking, that nonsense is made sacred and must not be investigated. Scarcely has liberty advanced sufficiently in this country to permit Freethinkers to tell their own opinion about the world and among the uneducated of all nations it is still dangerous to tell the truth in contradiction to their religious prejudice. What a poor, miserable god it must be who chooses his champions among the lowest types of man. As stated above, the process of thinking takes place under the same laws in all men, and consequently equal conditions must lead to equal convictions; that is, like facts logically connected must result in like conclusions. This important biological principle explains many features in history which otherwise appear paradox. It proves that conviction is neither subject to will, nor can it be artificially produced by any exterior force. It is the inevitable result of the impressions made upon our brain, or intellect. Conviction is no proof of truth; it may be right or wrong. It is wrong if the premises of the induction, the facts, are assumed instead of being real, and the conclusions are not corroborated by the visible, tangible condition of things. It is right if based on facts that can be demonstrated, and on deductions that find confirmation in the real world. Thus the belief in such a god as represented in the various religions, is a wrong conviction, based upon the arbitrary assumption of a base human mind, where we actually stand at the limit of our understanding. It is in direct, irreconcilable contradiction with all the existing facts. Our modern view of life is a correct or logical conviction, derived from the sum of observation constituting natural history. Its truthfulness is easily verified by applying it to any particular feature of individual or social life. A person can only convince himself; nobody else can do it. All that one can do in this respect is to furnish the ma-

terial for thought and explain the mode of reasoning. And if a person is thoroughly convinced, there is no power in the world that can change his conviction, except himself. For instance, when we say 2×2 is four there will be not one of the readers whose conviction in this respect could be shaken. Though he might be compelled by force to declare it was five, he would still continue to think that yet it is four. How completely mind and body are under the control of the last cause of reasoning, called volition, is demonstrated by such horrible aberrations of the human mind as the persecution of witches, heretics, etc., and, in the present, the useless wars.

The antagonistic tendencies of religion and progress cannot be better illustrated than by the saying of a man who is considered one of the greatest reformers that ever lived—Martin Luther. Apart from his just hatred of the pope, which he had the courage to proclaim openly, he was a very orthodox, superstitious fanatic, who never dreamed of the liberal ideas that were to follow his efforts, for which he had unconsciously opened the way. He says: "That two times two is four thou canst understand through thine reason, but if the authority says, two times two is five, this thou must believe against the knowledge and feeling." Here we have the whole principle of progress in a nutshell. All the accomplishments of the human race that place it above the rest of the animal kingdom, are the result of the application of this simple logical reasoning to all things, and science represents the treasure of truth gathered by this method. Religion or Regress says that two times two is five, whenever it is of material interest for one portion of society to let the other one continue its errors. And if man discovers an error made by his predecessor, the beast, the savage or the mediaeval barbarian, it must be accepted as the truth, and the life of a new generation begun on false premises. Religion does not say a thing must be true because it can be demonstrated to our senses at all times,—no, it must be true because mankind in its infancy did not know any better, because the savage in the interior of Africa believes in it and the uneducated of all nations carry the conviction in their hearts. And if we discover that the teachings are in direct contradiction with all the facts surrounding us, we must not presume that our former belief was wrong; no, then two times two must be five. That is faith. Progress says

(Continued on page 12.)

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The Blade has again been notified by the Postoffice Department that, under the new rulings, our paper will not be carried by mail to subscribers who are more than one year in arrears on their subscription. This confronts the Blade with a most serious business proposition, almost amounting to a calamity. If we are thus compelled to abstain from sending the Blade to all who are one year in arrears, or more, it will seriously affect our mailing list, and cause the Blade, in all probability, to lose several hundreds of dollars. On the other hand, if we continue sending the Blade to such of our subscribers it may result in our being denied the second-class privileges of the mail.

In view of such an order and notification, we urgently request that all subscribers who are delinquent to the extent of one year or more, will make an effort to have the date on their tabs moved before July 1, next. We ask this that no additional

handicap may be placed upon the Blade in the prosecution of its great work.

Look at your tabs, friends, and get a hustle on, that we may be relieved from any controversy with the department, or have the post-office authorities throw your paper out of the mails.

This should be made as important to you as it is to ourselves.

MAN'S TRIUMPH OVER THEOLOGY.

During the last two centuries man has traveled far and has won many a fair field from the dominion of darkness.

Man no longer dwells in caves and hollow trees, fighting naked with the wild beasts for his prey, the idle sport of a whimsical and capricious deity. We have encountered less than one-tenth of the twentieth century, and while hosts of the ignorant still profess, or claim to believe, without knowing why or how, the consensus of the highest educated opinion in all America, openly and fearlessly expressed, is that man has reached the high pinnacle of being recognized as the "avatar of the almighty."

Nor is there to be found in this declaration any attempt at a pacification of theological dicta, but it is uttered in an almost spirit of defiance. It is an opinion drawn from the repeated demonstrations of modern science, aided by the stern facts of history. It is a deduction which makes science alone the one great crucible wherein all opinions must be tested, a deduction that defies the ballistae of theological controversy and the assumed battering rams of the pulpsters.

This modern acceptance of science has silently crept into the curriculum of our greatest universities and has, at last, attained the ultimate without the theologians being actually aware of what was taking place. Our university teachings, in almost every department, from physiology to psychology,—matter to mind—are now so thoroughly steeped in methods of science that it is an impossibility to turn back. Every passing day brings our educators to a stronger realization of the fact that no system of instruction is now complete unless it is made to conform strictly with scientific methods. The clergy are not altogether insensible of this general trend. Modernism in the Romish church, and heresy expounders in the Protestant churches are but startling manifestations of this truth. Upon this one hypothesis, we are enabled to understand and explain their persistent antagonism towards university instructors and professors who have attempted the employment of scientific considerations of those subjects so long deemed to be entirely beyond its pale. Confronted by such a condition, and assuming that all such instructors could be removed from our educational institutions, the latter would be in a pitiable plight indeed.

Our attention has been called to a splendid article appearing in the July number of the Cosmopolitan Magazine,

and fearful lest we are unable to do it full and complete justice in this brief review, we advise our readers to procure a copy, which can be purchased at any newstand for the modest sum of fifteen cents. The article in question is by Harold Bolce, a writer and scholar of distinction, entitled "Avatars of the Almighty," and begins on page 209. In it is a collaboration of definite opinions uttered by the leading scholars of the country concerning god and religion, which constitute a full and complete answer to the extravagant claims of the advocates of orthodoxy, that the intelligence of the nation is on their side. For the benefit of many of our readers who may be unable, by one reason or another, to secure a copy of the magazine mentioned, we here append a collection therefrom, which they may read and study with profit:

"Whiskey, cocaine and alcohol bring temporary insanity, and so does a revival of religion—one of those revivals in which men lose their reason and self-control. This is simply a form of drunkenness, worthy of no more respect than the drunkenness that lies in the gutter.—*Prof. Boris Sidis, of the Pathological Institute of New York.*

But this eminent magazine writer does not stop here, for he approvingly quotes from President Jordan, of the Stanford University, who really gave utterance to the above criticism. But the Harvard psychologist, Prof. William James, insists that both Jordan and Sidis were too mild in their expressions concerning revivals, in that he goes even further in his denunciation of these outbursts of insanity, and says:

"Religious revivalism is a social bane; it is more dangerous to the life of society than drunkenness. As a sot, man falls below the brute; as a revivalist, he sinks lower than the sot."

These are strong words. Stronger, in fact, than what might have been given by the most radical of all our Free-thought papers, and coming from so eminent an authority, whose scholasticism cannot be questioned, it will have great weight with the thinking mind and must lead to a complete overthrow of modern Christian methods by bringing them into public contempt.

Prof. Edwin A. Earp, of Syracuse University, is next quoted as approving dancing, while Prof. Hugo Munsterberg, of Harvard, is quoted from in the following language:

"To become devout, man first got drunk; and our hosannahs are only echoes of the wine-engendered shoutings of celebrants who reeled through orgies long ago. Religion became sterile when the Puritan ceased to imbibe."

After reading this, reflect upon the following:

"The chronic belief of mankind, that events may happen for the sake of their personal significance, is an abomination."—*Prof. James, of Harvard.*

"They have indulged in the luxury of highly specialized creeds until they have come to religious bankruptcy. We have sixteen varieties of one sect and denominations enough to stock a museum and amaze our descendants."—*President W. H. P. Faunce, of Brown University.*

"It is not a part of China's business to give us her religion, and it is not our business to give China our religion."—*Prof. Bernard Moses, of the University of California.*

"The doctrine of the virgin birth was only an esoteric doctrine. Our generation does not share this old belief; does not feel that it was necessary. People today would not feel like ruling anyone out of the church who did not believe in the virgin birth."—*Prof. Herbert L. Willett, of the University of Chicago.*

"The church alone cannot save the world."—*Prof. Albion W. Small, of Chicago University.*

"When a wise philosophy is destructive, the fault lies not with the critic who finds the wound in our faith, but with the faith that has secretly nursed its own wounds."—*Prof. Josiah Royce, of Harvard.*

"Write out, not for publication, but for yourself alone, a statement of your conception of god. Fold it away, and then a year later, without consulting your first article of faith, set down anew your idea of the infinite. Now compare the two documents, and discover how your mind has changed regarding god."—*Prof. Edwin A. Earp, of Syracuse University.*

"The least creature of all mortals has more dignity and value than even an almighty god."—*Prof. Hugo Munsterberg, of Harvard.*

"The laws of physical and chemical and vital causation and correlation continue their sway in the affairs of men, with the added variant of the laws of psychical causation, whatever these may prove to be."—*Prof. Albion W. Small, of Chicago University.*

"Corresponding to the growing content of life's apprehended values and relationship, till our symbols stand, not for a merely metaphysical absolute, nor for an arbitrary divine decree, but for all the weal and woe, the blight and fulfilment, the waste and worth, the good and evil, of which human life and possibility are compacted, and till they stir the heart and command the conscience with devotion to the very ends that stir the soul of god, if god is love."—*Prof. E. C. Hayes, of the University of Illinois.*

"Science now bids us regard the universe as a dynamical unity in a process of evolution under immanent ideas."—*Prof. Geo. T. Ladd, of Yale.*

"The name of Jesus is not written, but plowed into the history of the world."—*Prof. Slater, of Chicago University.*

While any comment of considerable length on the foregoing is perhaps unnecessary, speaking most eloquently for themselves, yet we feel constrained to remark that in the foregoing quotations we find the revival business of the church subjected to a most remarkable criticism, thereby placing a low estimate upon the social value of the evangelists and their converts. The belief that god can be influenced to do something or to abstain therefrom through the medium of prayer, is slammed against the cold logic of physical fact. The eternal and universal division of the sects, missionary enterprise abroad, the immaculate conception, the power of the church as a saving factor, the deep and lasting wounds made in the body of religious belief by modern science, the great and serious error of man in ever believing in the existence of a god, the placing of man above gods, the dynamical unity of the universe, leaving no room for god outside of humanity, are all openly, fearlessly and frankly discussed, while the writer himself furnishes his readers with a brilliant array of argumentative and reasoning data.

Thus,, friends, rejoice, for the long night of intellectual slavery is past. America, the petted child of the world, will, through her university instructors, redeem her from brutal theological outrage, and on the higher intellectual hills already flame the harbinger of Reason's glorious morn. There is already a suspicion in the minds of both priests and preachers that, after all, they know no more, and many far less, of the Cosmos than do other men. The people no longer swallow theology as an anacanda would take an unwashed goat.

During the night of intellectual slavery and mental serfdom, hide-bound orthodoxy reigned supreme and practically every man was a church communicant. Today this is paramount only in those countries that have failed to keep pace with the car of progress. Here, in America, we find the highest intelligence of the nation ignoring god and subjecting the belief in god to a rigid scientific test. It may be excellent orthodoxy to believe, but what is revealed herein will demonstrate that it is no longer regarded as good sense.

The day of creed has already passed, and the day of deed is set firmly upon us. The church can no longer compel submission to supposed infallibility. Education is not interested in the conflicting claims of rival sects and creeds. Facts are now superior to form. It is not what men say, but what they do that counts. Creeds are no longer fashionable.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

News reports from British sources suggest that Parliament will have to wrestle with the problem of limiting,

restricting, or taking away altogether, the present power and privilege of the Dean of that world-famous edifice to deny sepulture, or admit to sepulture therein, the bodies of persons deceased, who have in some measure contributed to England's greatness.

The present controversy arises from the Dean's refusal to admit the body of the late George Meredith for sepulture within its walls, and as the Abbey is now come to be regarded as belonging to the nation at large, not to one man, or a set of men exclusively, the issue is to be laid before the House of Commons for the formulation and adoption of specific rules to govern such matters.

No man has done more to overthrow the theological conceptions and doctrines of the universe than Charles Darwin. His views upon evolution were met with stubborn resistance from every pulpit. He was denounced as an Atheist and his teachings ridiculed as being atheistical. Some modification of these orthodox views had obtained before Darwin died, and to such an extent that at his death the body was enshrined within this Abbey's walls among Britain's greatest dead. Some years later another great Englishman died. Herbert Spencer passed away. As a philosopher, thinker and reasoner he had no superior, nor have any arisen since. Although of a conservative turn, yet true to his ideals, Spencer was refused a place in the Abbey wherein Darwin had been given a resting place.

Now came George Meredith's death. His Freethought was not universally known, but his sympathies were with our cause. He was a writer of great and virile strength. His utterances were open challenges to orthodoxy. The body was cremated and the ashes buried at Dorking, the Dean of the Abbey having refused admittance, but tardily consented to a memorial service being held therein for the "repose of his soul." Meredith had refused to attend church, for the reason, as he had told a friend, he was "ashamed of what he heard there." It may be that on this account, and for other reasons, the Dean refused a place in Westminster to Meredith's ashes, but the end is not yet. From the London Express, a copy of which has been sent us, we learn that Mr. Godfrey Baring will ask the Prime Minister whether, having regard to certain recent occurrences, he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation vesting the control of sepultures in Westminster Abbey in some authority other than that of the Dean of Westminster, and that Mr. E. A. Pickersgill will ask if, inasmuch as Westminster Abbey has developed from a local cathedral into the national Valhalla, he will consider whether the time has come for legislation whereby the duty of awarding the honor of burial within its walls should be transferred from the custodian of the fabric to some authority representative of the nation.

These are encouraging signs. They demonstrate the enormous shift in public opinion. We are pleased to observe that Edior G. W. Foote, of the London Freethinker, is making a vigorous protest against the mummeries at-

tending the Meredith funeral, and defending his memory from orthodox assault.

FASHIONS IN RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

The late Col. Ingersoll once said that a "religion was superstition in fashion, and a superstition was a religion out of fashion," or words to that effect, and now we find the sentiment endorsed by Dr. Burrell, pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church, of New York, being of the Dutch Reformed denomination. In the columns of the Buffalo Express (N. Y.) he is quoted as saying:

"The preachers are changing the philosophical basis of their belief as often as the women change their hats. They take the cast-off fashions of Germany which come by slow freight. By the time they are in vogue here, they are being superseded over there.

Accepting this as true, it follows that it can make but little or no difference what a man or woman believes. If orthodox belief is, admittedly, an ever-shifting rainbow, containing no vista of promises, subject to modifications and change at the whim and fancy of its professors, the process must continue until the original tenets are entirely lost sight of. And what process could be more natural? Progress is the absolute order. From it there can be no appeal. Theology is subject to the same general trend. Its advocates must read and study if they are to keep pace with the educational demands of the age. Strive as they may to suppress the new thought, there are times and places when they must crop out, and without knowing how or why, the opinions and beliefs of professional theologians undergo many and complex changes. Personal interest, the ego, may aid in retarding the free and open expression of the new thought, but the trend of the American pulpit towards liberalism is apparent on every hand.

The sentiment expressed by Dr. Burrell is significant. For the past four years he has been the acting and active head in the department of homilectics in the Princeton Theological Seminary. He is also connected with the American Bible League, an organization now strenuously combating the Higher Criticism. And yet has any of the higher critics uttered aught more critical of the prevailing theological belief than Dr. Burrell himself? Dr. Burrell tries to be orthodox. He is ready to denounce any and all of our educational institutions which, in his opinion, are offenders against the popular religious faith. These facts ought to give greater weight to his words upon orthodoxy, for he is in a position to see, to understand, and to know.

No thinker can entertain the slightest doubt concerning the ultimate of orthodox faith. Its undulations are a veritable Joseph's coat. It is one thing today and another and vastly different thing tomorrow. Its personal god has sunk into a "divine immanence," and its heaven and hell

are merely "conditions," no longer actual places of residence. Its essential characters have been resolved into myths and its so-called sacred books have been proven spurious. Its forms and ceremonials are no longer granted public observance, and are but mere matters of individual taste and preference. When people believed in the existence of griffins, dragons and other monsters, the effect upon the mind was just the same as if these mythical non-descriptors had actually existed. So it is with the belief in god. No god can possibly exist for him who has no belief in god. Nor can belief, as a mere mental process, bring into existence that which does not exist.

The more mankind appreciates its permanent relationship with all nature, theology will disappear from its literature, and foolish worship will be unknown. It will not suffice to express social terms and feelings in sentiments of religion, for men will readily recognize the fraud. Thus every age brings a new theology. Each change is an abandonment of the old. The dictates of conscience are being given a wider recognition. Men cannot raise the dead. This applies to modes of thought and belief as forcibly as it does to animate nature. Every church is compelled to change its theological fashion plates to satisfy popular demand.

INGERSOLL RECANTATION FAKE.

The following is reproduced from the London Freethinker, of May 23, 1909:—

"A soul-saver in Dundee has been entertaining his audience with a story of Ingersoll's having written a 'recantation' (in verse) shortly before his death, and had it printed in Munsey's Magazine. Of course, the story is an absolute falsehood. One of our Dundee readers quotes the alleged Ingersoll verses and asks if we can indicate their source. We are writing away from our home and library, and cannot do more than say the verses have a distinct seventeenth century air, and might have been written by half a dozen poets of that period. We may as well quote them—as they may be heard of again:—

"O vanity! vain creature I that thought the godhead to defy,
And from my soul sought to efface God's presence and His
saving grace;

Yet when in darksome ways I trod, reviling Christ, denying
God,

High heaven's empyrean fire burned in my soul a new desire
For holy truth; and now within my soul rejoiceth free from
sin,

From sin of unbelief,—the worst for which man unbelieving's
curst.

All men behold, I stand confest, of God the Father manifest."

Anybody who believes Ingersoll wrote those verses, or that they were written by anyone else at the end of the nineteenth century, is past praying for from a literary point of view. But the shortest way to pin this Dundee soul-saver down is to ask him to produce the copy of Munsey's Magazine in which the verses appeared, with the signature of Robert G. Ingersoll after them. We advise our Dundee friends to do that at once.

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